Voluntary Retirement Scheme

1718. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) how many people have retired under voluntary retirement scheme in Central Public Sector Undertakings; and

(b) whether all of them been paid their dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b) As per the available information 1,76,954 employees in the Central Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) have opted for Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) till 31.3.1995. Government have not received any representation from any Central PSU employee about non-payment of VRS dues.

Weeding out Amrit of Samudra Manthan

1719. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the Hindustan Times of 18th June, 1995, captioned "weeding out amrit of samudra manthan",

(b) if so, whether as reported weeds with amrit like property have been found in sea bed; and

(c) what are the curative properties of the different weeds found in ocean bed; and

(d) the steps that have been and are being taken to popularise the curative effect of these weeds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ELECTRONICS AND OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some of the weeds have shown significant biological activity with medical properties.

(c) A medical weed (alga) from West Coast has shown antiviral activity and a new compound showing efficacy against Encephlo myco cardiatis virus (EMCV) in animal models has been identified. Two others have shown potent anti-diabetic effect in rat model and an active compound has also been isolated and its blood sugar lowering effect has been confirmed in animal models. There are several other organisms (sponges, corals, echinodermata) which have been identified to have potent hepato protective property (that protect liver) some are effective against blood pressure (Hypotensive) and showing Central Nervous Systems depressant action. A coral effective against amoebiasis in animal models also has been identified.

(d) Under the National Programme for identification of Bioactive substances, laboratory trials are now going on, on these materials for testing their effectiveness for ultimate use as drugs.

Proposal to set up Medical Colleges

1720. PROF. RAM BAKHSH SINGH VARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of medical colleges at present in the country together with State-wise details thereof;

(b) whether the number of these medical colleges is adequate in proportion to the growing population of the country;

(c) if not, whether Government are contemplating to open Medical Colleges during the year 1995-96;